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WASHINGTON

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WASHINGTON.

THE HERO AND STATESMAN.

EULOGY.

BY JAMES M. STEWART.

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WASHINGTON, D. C.

1888.

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TO MY FRIEND,

COMMODORE J. E. MONTGOMERY, OF KENTUCKY,

I DEDICATE THIS WORK,

WITH SENTIMENTS OF HIGH REGARD.

J. M. S.

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SYNOPSIS.

—

The Peopling of Countries. Growth of Nations. Founding of Dynasties. Struggles for the overthrow of oppressive Rulers.

Ancestors of Washington. Establishment of a branch of the Family in America.

Mount Vernon. By the Tomb of Washington.

Youth of Washington. His first Love. His Studies. Labors and Sports of the Gentry of Virginia in the olden time. The Chase.

Early Manhood of Washington. The French and Indian War. His first Battle. Defeat of Braddock.

Advent of Mrs. Washington and her Children at Mount Vernon.

The first mutterings of the Storm of the Revolution. Battle of Bunker Hill.

The First Congress, in Philadelphia. DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE.

Washington appointed Commander of the American Army. Assumes command at Cambridge.

"Boston in chains." Movements of the Army. The British evacuate the City.

League of the Colonies for the prosecution of the struggle for Independence. The coming of Lafayette, Steuben, Kosciusko and other foreigners to fight in the Patriot Cause.

War of the Revolution. Hardships encountered by the Army. Difficulties of the Commander-in-Chief. Treason of Arnold. Defection among the Generals. Advent of the French Allies and Triumph of the Patriots.

Washington resigns command of the Army and retires to Mount Vernon.

Formation of the Federal Union. Washington the first President.

Death of Washington.

Apotheosis.

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WASHINGTON.

EULOGY.

JAMES M. STEWART.

Years lightly pass along the path of time,
And few events their histories comprise;
But centuries march with statelier ranks sublime,
And eras mark where realms to power arise.

The Spirit of the Lord moves over lands,
And tribes appear to break and till the soil;
Hamlets and cities grow, where defter hands
Ply for the world their vast and varied toil.

For all the vernal affluence: bud and bloom,
The summer fields and autumn's rich array,
The withered leaves and grasses, and the gloom
Which mantles nature's darlings in decay.

Thus do the nations have their times of Spring,
Flower, fruit—perchance the winter destiny:
For power abused and virtue lost will bring
Dull languor, listlessness, and slavery.

As nature's seasons varying moods present,
So phases human have their times of change:
Thought quickens hope, and faith grows eloquent,
Prompts higher deed and dares the broader range.

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With borders widening numbers multiply,
And some, aspiring, claim superior state;
The brave defend, they die for liberty,
Or bend before inexorable fate.

But God is right; though peoples be in fault,
His wiser plan and purpose never fail;
His agents forward press nor ever halt,
Though tyrant rule, or anarchy prevail.

What time, amid the whirl of changing scenes,
The call is heard, and honor makes demand,
The need imperative decrees the means,
Ordains for work and nerves the willing hand.

A nation's annals, on historic page,
Oft point the advent of a better reign:—
With Pericles there came the golden age,
With Moses Israel broke her bondage chain.

So thou, my country, when the time was ripe
For liberty, didst summon mighty aid;
Then from thy chivalry its noblest type
Arose to lead, nor ever trust betrayed.

He wore the seal of promise on his face:
Peer of fair Egypt's found, adopted one;
And the high virtues of a loyal race
Were born in him, Virginia's worthy son.

Endowed with health in nature's smiling hour,
Of stature grand, of manhood's fairest plan,
Gentle, yet strong, and faithful in his power,
In thought and act he was a noble man.

Of warrior race came he, of blood approved,
Whose full, deep volume beat with pulses strong,
Such as to mercy deeds mankind hath moved,
Nor borne with patience tyranny and wrong.

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The records of his ancient line commence
  Where Gallia's cliffs breast back the northern sea;
From listed fields they bear their honors thence,
  In the proud ranks of Norman chivalry.

But not alone with tourney shield and lance,—
  In scenes of graver strife their fame is known;
Their challenge sounds far in the van's advance,
  Where Harold's fall o'erthrows the Saxon throne.

In royal court, or camp of war they move;
  To council wisdom, and to field they bring
Their loyal zeal, and by devotion prove
  They love their country and revere their king.

A vigorous stock adventurous, their increase
  Pours out abroad abundant overflow;
They bear with shield the olive branch of peace,
  They wear the sword, but strike no craven blow.

Vast realms remote, beyond where ocean rolls
  Far surges tossing westward crests of foam,
Invite their willing feet, their earnest souls,
  With promise of contentment and a home.

Beyond, and still beyond the sunset skies,
  They urge the winged sail, the gliding keel,
And other lands, where other stars arise,
  The empire of their hopes and dreams reveal.

They greet the fair America,—a bride
  Of virgin freshness and of ample dower;
The forest waves them welcome, and thy tide,
  Potomac, wafts them to her sylvan bower.

Ancestral glory is not wholly vain;
  But honors lowly borne may nought avail;
As mountain streams, which fertilize the plain,
  Reproach the landscape when their currents fail.

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Of such fair ancestry of old renowned,
Came he, our country's highly gifted one;
So lived, so moved he, that the world hath crowned
With proudest bays the brow of WASHINGTON!

MOUNT VERNON! beautiful in age, we fling
Our garlands, fancy-woven, over thee;
Serenely pensive, grateful pilgrim, bring
Thy offerings to this Shrine of Liberty!

With thoughts like rhythmic waves on moonlit seas,
And reverent footsteps tread this holy ground,
Where, shaded by these ancient upland trees,
A hero's ashes rest in sleep profound.

Come hither, ye who walk the world's great stage
With stride pretentious—folly's thoughtless brood;
Here muse life's deeper lesson, O ye sage!
And ye the pets of fortune's generous mood.

Nor deem the measure of the grace denied,
Ye lowlier reckoned by presumptuous test;
His grandeur is your heritage; your pride
Should hold his memory as a rich bequest.

Come all, as they who leave the fields at night,
To share the joys which home and peace afford,
To rest from labor by the fireside bright,
Where restless fingers spread the evening board.

Meet spot were this for honor's wreath to bloom
For those who crowns hereditary wear:
To kneel in reverence by the simple tomb,
To crave a blessing and receive it there.

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For he whose mortal is encoffined here,
  Arose to height above imperial state:
He sought the simpler course of life to steer,
  He rode the tide of glory calm, sedate!

Imbued with sterling pride, with nicest sense
  Of others' due, he only claimed his right;
He worshiped God and Liberty! and hence
  We read his history in empyreal light.

For years he toiled to reach Earth's grandest crown,
  By wildering paths to mortals seldom known;
Then, rising to the zenith of renown,
  In triumph hour refused an offered throne.

How like his soul! how like a hero's dream,
  The scene sublime, when the war-chiefs arose
And prayed him to accept the meed supreme,
  And he rebuked them as their country's foes!

Revered! eternal gratitude be thine,
  For hope exulting, for a land redeemed!
Stoop from thy heaven, the realm of grace benign,
  And see what soul prophetic never dreamed:

States, bound by cord indissolubly strong
  Yet seeming frail and weak as silken strand,
Extending from far northern hills along
  To fair savannahs in the sunnier land;

From where Atlantic's fitful seas assail
  The high, resounding cliffs with sullen roar,
To where Pacific, fanned by gentler gale,
  Lifts the long, curling billows to the shore.

And thou canst find bright homes and souls beloved,
  Far leagues beyond the ancient boundaries,
At altars kneel where erst the bison roved,
  And list the grand cathedral litanies.

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It is not idle fancy which declares
That free-winged spirits may return to Earth,
From higher realm, to ponder early cares,
Or kindly ministries where love had birth.

A presence grand, by mortal eyes unseen,
Perchance a shadow form in yonder hall
Holds mystic court, and with benignant mien
Waves gracious benediction over all;

Or still, with winning voice and placid face,
Renews his ancient, hospitable care,
With kind solicitude, with courteous grace,
For loving pilgrims, reverent, gathered there.

For he had early loves—this man so high,
Who bore a nation's shield upon his arm:
For him the sunlit lands, the starry sky,
For him was maiden beauty's matchless charm.

Meseems that even he, by lawn, or brook,
Recalls with tender thoughts the days of youth,
Where, pondering gentle deeds, his spirit took
From nature beautiful its trust and truth.

Thou, broad Potomac, bright in early morn,
Or silver-surfaced in the summer noon,
Or starred by shining worlds to glory born,
Companions of the sweet, night-wedded Moon;

Ye woods, once haunt of red deer shy and fleet,
Ye glens, with cool recesses still and dim,
And ye, soft lawns, that soothe the fevered feet,
All, all are mutely eloquent of him.

Here boyhood joys with manhood dreams were blent;
Here love's soft wings were folded in his breast;—
The sweet revealment! witching discontent!
The dear delirium! ecstacy's unrest!

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Perhaps he trod these lawns in ~~sighing~~ pensive bliss,
When tender fancies fanned the mystic flame,
And feigned in fragrant flowers his lady's kiss,
Or whispered to the evening wind her name;—

Or oft he launched his boat, with careless grace,
When thou, fair river, wooed his languid oar,
And fancied on the moonlit waves her face,
Or dreamed her sweet voice calling from the shore.

Youth's first fond bliss! life's gold without alloy!
Hope thrilled by visions beautiful and dear!
Thou bright weft woven in the web of joy,
Of memory's transports thou art most sincere.

O! ever they who young love's anguish know,
Have kindly natures in life's later day;
As withered flowers, or buds which never blow,
Retain some fragrance in their slow decay.

Such fate was thine, thou gentle youth; thy love
With faith's ethereal veil invested one;
But not for thee the thoughtless girl,—thy dove,
Fair, but perhaps unworthy Washington.

High are his aims, his aspirations bright,
As vigorous youthhood, with elastic feet,
Moves swiftly onward towards that crowning height
Where the great chart of life shall be complete.

Home duties well performed with zealous care,
A spirit free and bold, and glowing health,
And blood electric as the mountain air,
Endow him with the best of nature's wealth.

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To science drawn, to learnèd themes inclined,
  To emulate the honors of his race,
He fills with treasure-lore his thoughtful mind,
  And toil and sport develop manly grace.

But late in memories of thy ancient men,
  Were pictured scenes of high enjoyment there,
And history points and fame's delightful pen,
  Thy hospitable homes, Virginia fair.

Mount Vernon's hall, in halcyon days of old,
  Had many a guest: proud men and stately dames,
Culpeper, Fairfax, and the scores untold,
  That bore with honor honorable names.

There hours of pleasure flew on joyous wing;
  The store was ample and the feast was free;
They drank to honor and their liege, the king,
  And some there were that mused of liberty.

Fair ran the peaceful river in the east;
  Far spread the grander forests in the west,
Where many a savage brute, or gentler beast
  Made pastime rare for master and for guest.

Fancy presents, in vivid tints, the view
  Of mettled hunters, fleet and rare of grace,
That spurn, with polished hoofs, the shining dew,
  And loudly neigh, impatient for the chase.

Behold! the autumn dawnlight hints the day;
  The gray, cool mist on field and valley lies;
The joyous hounds are free;—away! away!
  A stag of ten must be the morning prize!

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Deep-voiced, the peals far cadencies awake—
Sonorous base and lighter melody;
Such sylvan harmonies resounding, make,
For huntsman's ears the sweetest minstrelsy.

And oak-crowned height, and winding foresf dell,
Responsive, wakening to the merry morn,
With frolic echoes join the strains to swell
Of baying hounds and calls of bugle horn.

By sunlit hills, and over fragrant vales,
By woodlands deep and many a streamlet ford,
The chase extends, till youthful ardor fails,
And ample stores await the festive board.

A stag and doe—fair dame and ancient sire,
Attest the triumph, greet the general gaze;
And sweating steeds and panting hounds retire,
To dream the chase renewed in coming days.

In sports like this, or in the grave debate,
In husbandry, or with the ready pen,
The old-time fathers glorified the State,
And lived the lives of strong and worthy men.

Mother of stalwart sons and daughters now,
A vigorous stock in youth, or life's full prime,
Mother of statesmen, fair Virginia, thou
Mayst well exult and point thy earlier time.

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Champion of virtue, and the soul of truth,
Keenly alive to honor's excellence,
He presses onward, and the noble youth
Ascends to manhood's lofty eminence.

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The pride and vigor of his ancient race,
  The high ambition of those knightly sires,
Prompt ever unto danger's foremost place,
  And calls for war revive the fiercer fires.

For hark! from lands remote, beyond his gaze,
  In anguish notes the midnight cries of fear
Resound from scenes of woe, where hamlets blaze,
  And shrieks of wives assailed appal the ear.

And all the lion in his soul awakes!
  "Arm for defence!" the voice of manhood cries;
Nor danger daunts, nor toil his purpose shakes,
  Nor all the tears that dim a mother's eyes.

To meet the Indian foes he sounds his call,
  Which, reaching hills and valleys near and far,
Summons the hardy yeomen to the hall,
  To strike with him the awful blow of war.

Listens Dinwiddie in his place of power,
  The wail of wives and many a hapless one;—
Mount and away!—and glory strikes the hour,
  Morn of thy nobler life, O Washington!

Led by their youthful chief, the warriors ride
  Through tangled thicket vale and mazy wood,—
Men of fierce bravery, and true and tried,
  That erst the savage onsets have withstood.

Not then as now the path those brave men trod,—
  No pleasant fields beyond the vistas lay;
No harvest glories crowned the upturned sod,
  And only wild and wildering was the way.

The dark barbarian, learned in forest lore,
  In ambush lurked, a rude a wary foe,
Or plied by shaded streams, with noiseless oar,
  In birch canoe, and struck his deadly blow.

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Sternly, to wreak the vengeance and the doom,
Those yeomen toiled along the winding path;
Nor heeded they the solitude, the gloom,
And nature's voices blent in tempest wrath.

Where trees their branches thickly overarched,
By cliffs, the ramparts of the Indian braves,
Where copses dark could shield a foe they marched,
Where glens might be their lonely forest graves.

They struck the savage in his native haunt,
Till he recoiled, abashed if unsubdued;
Thenceforth less boastful was his vicious taunt,
His mien less stubborn, insolent and rude.

Let history pause, and for a moment trace,
In thoughtful mood, by rule of right sustained,
The wrongs inflicted on that fated race
From whom this glorious continent was gained.

They lived the life of forest innocence,
By diplomatic arts and forms untried;
Their deeds, their memories taught them eloquence,
And nature bountiful their wants supplied.

They loved and were beloved; the cares of home,
If rude, comprised the dearest joys they knew;
In mighty woodlands they were free to roam,
By instinct guided faithfully and true.

They fed the stranger from their sylvan herds;
They bade him welcome to their woods and streams;
And he repaid them oft with wily words.
Or lulled them into false and fatal dreams.

They had their few, the simpler forms of state;
In war with manly fortitude they strove;—
Mark we the line between barbarian hate
And ours, should danger menace those we love,

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And would we fail avenging blade to draw
  Against invaders of our peace and rest,
Or bend supinely to a higher law,
  Before the wrong and outrage were redressed?

We deem that Providence decreed this land
  Of wilderness for wiser men to use;—
'Tis won—'tis ours;—thus let the record stand,
  Nor summon Heaven the conquest to excuse.

Flout not his memory with words of scorn;—
  Lo! where the trees their bending branches wave,
And where the ploughshare sires our golden corn,
  The red-man's home, the hapless Indian's grave!

But French invaders sought the prize to wring
  From those who urged more honorable gain,
Who claimed, by title from the British king,
  The right of free dominion and domain.

Thou, gallant Braddock, felt their craft and power,
  Their vengeance by Monongahela's shore,
Where unseen foemen poured, in thy dark hour,
  Libations to their gods, thy English gore.

And there, as one endowed with charmèd life,
  Rode the young Washington, a mark full fair,
Unharmed, untouched, through all that awful strife,
  Where bullets rang, where arrows cut the air.

The hand of God protected, as with shield,
  From the fierce rage of war that peerless form,
For nobler work, upon a wider field
  Scatheless to ride amidst a wilder storm.

Such was the rude baptismal rite of fire
  Which gave America her chieftain sage:
Wise to advance, like Fabius to retire,
  And win for freedom freemen's heritage.

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In council wise, as in the battle bold,
His ardent soul flames for the State's defence,
Where sweeps o'er venerable statesmen old,
The tide of Henry's burning eloquence.

For things of mightiest import and sublime,
Are rising daily in the public mind,
Advancing with the onward march of time,
To greet the morn of hope for all mankind.

The greed of arrogance, the ruthless sway,
The bondage with inevitable blight,
Are being measured, in the solemn day,
Against the public claim, the common right.

An empire conquered by the axe and plough,
Streams which pay willing tribute to the sea,
Nature, with freedom stamped upon her brow,
Teach that great peoples likewise should be free.

Soldier and statesman, yet a man withal
Formed to adorn the sphere of happier life,
The lover brings, to grace his highland hall,
A mistress beautiful, a faithful wife.

And children with her come, to lend the scene
The innocence of mirth, the tender joy:
A gentle girl with pleasant eyes serene,
And, a fond mother's pride, a noble boy.

To these he turns, with all the wealth of love
That glows benignly in a father's eyes;
For Heaven that sent the lonely nest a dove,
The gift of offspring of his blood denies.

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Love-winged, his hope and happiness increase,
And added burdens but as blessings seem;
His faith is purity, his home is peace,
And joy is like a summer morning dream.

With vast domain—almost a royal dower—
A generous soil that wooes the plough and hoe,
And friendships, charm of every social hour,
His cup is full to brimming overflow.

And thou wert lovely in the olden time,
Mount Vernon, fairer in the days of old;
Rich in the products of a genial clime:
In nature's blazon wrought in green and gold.

Thy bowers, now desolate as cypress shade
Which gives to solitude funereal gloom,
Were gay with life in fairest forms arrayed,
Of manliest men and beauty's bud and bloom.

There the tired wanderer for the night reposed;
The unfed hungry from thy doors away
Was never turned; thy broad gates never closed
On stranger guest, forbidding him to stay.

Thy mistress ruled her home with matron grace,
And smiling homage owned her gentle reign;
Her queenly dignity of form and face
Inspired devotion and forbade to feign.

Thy master, whose just law was absolute,
Where spread his acres and his boundaries ran,
In courtesy, though grave, displayed the fruit
Of nature's noblest work: a high-bred man.

He held his humble toilers as their friend,
Attentive to each need and honest claim;
Prompt to their griefs the kindly ear to lend,
And only harsh when justice was his aim.

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They lived in happy innocence of guile,
  Nor felt nor feared the hard, oppressive power;
Reward they read in his approving smile,
  If toil compelled, or pleasure ruled the hour.

Tradition points, and fancy's pencil paints
  The moonlit evening and the emerald lawn,
And, mindful of the few and light restraints,
  They dance with gestures free as forest fawn;

While master, mistress, and the mansion guest,
  Behold their pastime and encourage all.
Till heedful cares proclaim the hour of rest,
  And hush for silent night the lawn and hall.

Sweet dream of peace, contentment, and repose!
  Why break the charm? why rend the silver cord?
Alas! 'tis fate;—our briefest days are those
  That wing our hopes, that measure our reward.

More dear, O Washington! to thee more fair
  Thy rich domain than lovelier lands of Earth;
And all thy joy is centered in the care
  Of home companions by thy ample hearth.

But pleasure's reign is aye too bright to last;—
  Lo! on the darkening eastern sky appears
A storm of war, whose desolating blast,
  Shall end thy transports, shade thy coming years.

Long have the people to oppression bowed,
  And purchased for their homes inglorious peace;
Stung to resistance now, they cry aloud
  That right shall rule, that tyranny shall cease.

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The insolent encroachments of the king,
  Faith born of thought in hope's approving hour,
Fire the free, sterling spirits, and they fling
  Back to the throne defiance of his power.

Brave men can die, but they will not be slaves!
  Is the fierce language of each patriot's eye;
Sternly they meet around the bloody graves,
  And "Lexington and vengeance!" is their cry.

That martyr blood, poured out along the sod,
  Each drop more precious than the rarest gem
In England's crown, the master hand of God
  Shall set in freedom's priceless diadem!

From vale and hilltop sounds the call: "To arms!"
  The balefires blaze, and fife, and clarion horn,
And clamorous drum-beat spread the loud alarms
  Afar that memorable April morn.

The wrathful yeoman for a moment stays,
  To wipe the sweat-drops from his frowning brow;
Stern Putnam hears, and with his eyes ablaze
  With passion in the furrow leaves his plough,

Mounts the old farm-horse, erst his faithful barb,
  And venting words of fierce and vengeful ban,
Spurs off, away, arrayed in homespun garb,
  To urge the war and lead the battle van.

Old Stark, far off in his New Hampshire town,
  Listens the call, and vaults upon his steed,
And, like a thunderbolt, in wrath rides down,
  To fight for freedom in the hour of need.

O! it is glorious to behold the rage
  Of those whom ravage to resistance drives;
O! it is joy to write on country's page
  The roll of honor and the gift of lives!

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From farm and forge, from many a hamlet home,
From menaced lands, from regions far away,
Fathers and sturdy sons together come,
Where meet the patriot hosts in armed array.

Prescott, renowned for valiant deeds, is there,
Whose name is breathed in war's wild eloquence;
Knowlton, and Ward, and Gridley, swift to dare
The swift assault, or breast the strong defence.

Warren, aflame for liberty adored,
And hundreds more that feel the battle thrill,
Poise the long firelock, point the flashing sword,
And wreak the wrath of God from Bunker Hill!

That crest is Freedom's altar! Lo! the flame,
The smoke as incense rising to the skies;
There the brave patriots heaven's decree proclaim,
And there the awful voice of war replies!

Behold! the foes advance, with bated breath,
Against yon earthwork yesterday unknown;
Thrice march the British legions unto death,
And twice recoil, o'erwhelmed and overthrown!

They tread the embattled height, but at the cost
Of bleeding ranks, the mangled and the slain;
Honor they save, but ancient prestige lost,
Gives to the patriot cause unmeasured gain.

Revenge, like the barbarian's crescent blade
Cast heedless, may return and pierce the breast;
Already is the royal cause betrayed,
Already lost its empire of the West.

England shall mourn the useless sacrifice,
The wrong inflicted and the right denied;
Her vain regret shall pay the heavy price
For the dark tragedy where Warren died!

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To inmost depth the public soul is stirred;
The patriots listen, like wild steeds restrained,
The utterance of that spirit-thrilling word
Conceived in justice and of Heaven ordained.

O Liberty! how excellent art thou!
The highest good in human destinies;
How grand are they who at thy altar bow,
To live revered, or die thy votaries!

What grasp can give full freedom to the pen?
What pencil tint the glorious light recall
Which glows upon the brows of those grave men
In Congress met in Independence Hall?

Momentous issues hang upon the hour;
They question fortune; they demand of fate
Revealment of the future; pray for power
To break the chain and unify the State.

What shall the verdict of the Congress be?
Will they be wise in this soul-trying time?
And, rising to the height of majesty,
Will they pronounce the shiboleth sublime?

"Ring! father; ring!"—a child's voice breaks the spell;
The grand result shall light our altar flames!—
"Ring! father; ring!"—and Independence Bell
To all the nations liberty proclaims!

Rend the old garb of withered Eden leaves,
And toss the fragments to the vagrant wind;
Henceforth the warp and weft that freedom weaves.
Shall form a robe of honor for mankind!

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The land is up! What chief shall draw the sword,
To point the battle-ground, nor lay it down,
Until the common right has been restored,
And honor shall decree the victor's crown?

The people rise! Who shall the leader be,
Of fearless soul, like Sparta's hero king?
Who consecrate the new Thermopylæ
For bud and bloom of fame's eternal Spring?

He comes! Virginia sends her grandest son,
By wise men chosen, best of all the brave,
Who shall proclaim, by deeds heroic done,
That he who strikes with God shall country save.

O Washington! how wide, how vast thy field,
And worthy as the classic land of Greece;—
Our brave Leonidas! behind thy shield
Shall march the new-born nation unto peace.

Thine, Cambridge, first the honor to behold
The blade that caught the early morning beam,
Which history shall reflect on page unrolled,
Till ending time shall break Earth's fever dream.

Rebellion! lift thy head, the die is cast!
Patriots! united, consecrate, arise!
'Tis revolution now! the stream is passed;
Beyond your Rubicon an empire lies!

Wrong, or redemption; honor's bloom, or blight;
Freedom, or bondage with a heavier chain;
Those are the issues;—God defend the right!
Or all thy promises are vague and vain.

List! the glad omen! Hark! the armies hail
Their glorious chief with loud and long acclaim;
Order and discipline at once prevail,
Evoked from chaos by his magic name.

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The foes are many and the task is hard;
  But they who, armed for justice, strike their blow,
Are servants of the Lord, and he will guard
  Against their failure and their overthrow.

Son of America! of wisdom taught,
  Thou art the fittest in these solemn hours,
To lead our heroes, guide the public thought,
  While horrors threaten and the darkness lowers.

Patriots are they, but soldiers how unlike,
  That spring to arms and to thy standard flock;
But they are men who think before they strike,
  Then strike to conquer in the battle shock.

Boston in chains! low at her conqueror's feet!
  How throbs the public pulse with anger thrill!
Ride! horsemen; ride! spur your strong coursers fleet,
  And cry the call for war from every hill.

Father! arise, and with your gallant son,
  The rude, wild lesson of the conflict learn;
Mother! prepare. when battle days are done,
  To mourn their loss, or greet their home return.

Far as the States in league extend their bounds,
  The call is heard, and every nerve is tense;
The clamor rises, and the shout resounds
  Which summons all for State and home defence.

O grand! when those who bondage long have known,
  Arm for full freedom,—not the coward mean;
These are not hirelings of the British throne,
  That march with serried ranks on Cambridge green

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East, north, and west the patriot hosts are spread,
And the shrill fife and clamorous drum are heard,
While, marking time, they halt with firmer tread,
And wait the charge, impatient for the word.

Close draw, and closer yet the lines; advance,
Like tide encroaching on a narrowing bound;
Your wary chieftain's eyes, with lightning glance,
Shall mark for you each point of vantage ground.

O grand! O rare! An army well equipped
For war, with ships in harbor stored with arms,
Pent up, beleaguered! fighting not, yet whipped
By the rude toilers of the shops and farms!

Up anchors! turn your keels and sail away,
Ye ruthless bands whose trade is to destroy;
Let your shamed leader veil his face to-day,
While Boston bells ring canticles of joy!

Bid the glad anthems rise, the cannons roar;
New England rends the shackle-chain of slaves!
She spurns the foemen from her ocean shore,
And sends her winds to drive them o'er the waves.

But pause not here; a greater work remains
Than this so glorious and so wisely done;
Thy mission is to break all British chains
That bind thy struggling country, Washington.

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Behold! how wondrous, how sublime the view!
Vast States unite for war and dare the strife!
Propitious Heaven decrees an epoch new;
A nation born is throbbing into life!

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The wise, the brave of other lands declare
That men are equal born, and should be free;
And chiefs renowned unto our shores repair,
From realms beyond the surges of the sea.

From Poland, German lands, from gallant France,
They come with proffer of their arms and aid,
The cause of causes greatest to advance,
With counsel, courage, and with ready blade.

Honor to thee! nor shall the world forget,
Nor freemen fail to muse thy priceless worth,
To love thee, prize thee, generous Lafayette,
While virtue writes the records of the Earth.

Dear to the heart of Washington, whose arm
Enfolds and draws thee to his yearning breast;
Around thy memory fancy weaves her charm,
A nation holds thee aye its honored guest.

Steuben, illustrious in thy native land,
Immortal in this favored realm of ours,
If thought of mine fit measure could command,
How should I point thy vast and varied powers?

Thou strong support of him whose anxious soul
Hath need of thee in night of sore dismay,
Thy genius shall the shadows backward roll,
And light reveal, the flush of coming day.

Honor to thee! O Kosciusko! thou
That dreamed of Liberty in boyhood days;
The world shall place a chaplet on thy brow
That well may claim ambition's purest bays.

Thy country laden with a heavy woe,
With feuds intestine, noble hearts that break,
And every sister nation for a foe,
Well mayst thou wear the cypress for her sake.

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And ye, all men, whate'er your lot or race,
  Who to America devotion bring,
Fame shall accord ye worthy page and place,
  And history's muse shall write your offering.

The world is tired of ravage and of wrong,
  The fetters that the humble long have worn;
Manhood, arise! chant the immortal song,
  And point thy banner high and bravely borne.

Thine is the honor, O my country! thine,
  To be the battle-ground of Liberty;—
Strong be thy arm; may Providence benign
  With love sustain, with light encompas thee.

The foe is mighty—she whose flag unfurled
  Waves ever in the sunlight and the gale,
Whose warrior chiefs are known of all the world,
  Where armies march, or war's great navies sail.

And art thou wary? dost thou measure well
  The task, O hero? Hast thou Argus eyes?
For only tireless zeal can break the spell,
  And wisdom mark the dangers that shall rise.

Thy voice must summon armies; thou must lead
  In swift advance, or plan the wise retreat;
Thy pen the starving soldier's wants must plead,
  His rags, his wretchedness, his unshod feet.

On the long shores where break Atlantic waves,
  Where mighty rivers to the deeps descend,
And where in forests lurk the Indian braves,
  Thy prescience must provide, thy arm defend.

Toil thou must bear with patience; jealous tongue
  Reproachful word and bitter taunt shall dare;
Darkness enshroud thee darkest wilds among,
  And even thy own bosom friend despair.

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Treason shall use its foul and serpent fang,
To sting thee in thy rude and dangerous path;
Thou must endure emotion's sharpest pang,
While justice vindicates thy righteous wrath.

One whom thy pleading mercy would forgive,
Of gentle blood, in manhood's fair estate,
Must die a felon death; and he shall live,
Who wove the charm that lured him to his fate.

'Tis only just; crown him with cypress wreath,
That bleached upon the pallid brow of Hale,
Who left to honor all he could bequeath:
The grandeur of his martyr, dying wail.

Arnold! than Ephiates far more base,
Lips are polluted when thy name they speak!
Thy treachery shall the crime almost efface,
The history of the foul and recreant Greek.

Slowly shall turn the lagging wheel of time,
And years elapse before thy work be done;
And art thou equal to the task sublime?
And hast thou Atlas shoulders, Washington?

Armies and fleets shall menace; chief have sway,
With panoply of almost regal power;
Trained in the school of war, stern soldiers they,
Of Britain's potency the pride and flower.

Brunswick and Hesse their devoted bands
Shall hither send, exultant for the chance,
And sell for slaughter! Chiefs of German lands,
How foul ye are compared with princely France!

Your subjects bartered, to the shambles brought,
For gold to gild your sham of royal state!
O brutes! for ye not one forgiving thought—
Only the vicious luxury of hate.

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Can history point a sadder, gloomier sight,
  Or gifted pencil picture from despair
A scene to match the dark and dreadful night,
  And all thy frozen horrors, Delaware?

Muse, gentle pity, own he sorrow thrill,
  As prison ships their hideous dead disgorge!
Mute feeling shrink, with sympathetic chill,
  Before the Winter blasts of Valley Forge!

O country! blush that in the hour of pain,
  When dark events disasters dire forbode,
The great commander often pleads in vain
  For those aweary who must bear thy load.

Think of those toiling feet whose tracks, with blood
  Ensanguine wastes of sheeted hail and snow,
Braving the stony path, the ice-cold flood,
  In swift retreat before a pampered foe!

And dost thou, Congress, listen the alarm,
  The call where even heroes seem dismayed?
Shame that ye strengthen not the laboring arm!
  Shame that slow tongues should counsel tardy aid.

Thou, war-worn chief, the bulwark of the State,
  Must feel thy soul with grief and anger burn;
And thou must bear the insolence of fate,
  O hero! till thy tide to fortune turn.

With armies wasting like the April snow,
  Unfed, scarce clad, defeated and forlorn,
Thou must, in thy dark hours, their sorrows know,
  Brave watchman, faithful, waiting for the morn.

But Heaven the chart of fortune will unroll:
  Already dawnlight greets thy anxious eyes;
Be steadfast, Washington; all doubts control;—
  Through vista shades the path of promise lies.

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And morning cometh! Lo! on eastern sky,
Mirage of squadrons to the conflict pressed;
A champion hears the throttled people's cry,
And Gaul shall meet the Briton in the West.

Thou glorious France! impulsive, generous, just,
True the claim of ancient chivalry,
Thy hand shall raise a sister from the dust,
And write thy name in light of liberty.

Yet aid comes not before the tests of skill,
The brave advances, battles ordered well,
Have proved thy peerless potency of will—
Strong to endure, and triumph to compel.

And thus the years move on—the lagging years,—
And still beyond the dawn of peaceful days;
As fortune were absorbed with jealous fears,
And time were looking on with careless gaze.

But not in vain the change so slowly wrought:
Faith lights her halo on thy noble brow;
Less tense and strained its lines of anxious thought,
Thy patriots, tried, are dauntless soldiers now.

Defection, doubt, dismay are overthrown;
Bending with joy to thy supreme command,
The chiefs, accordant all, thy glory own,
And circle round thee, guardians of the land.

Near and afar the din of war resounds,
And deeds of gallant bravery are done;
The foes, retreating still to narrowing bounds,
No longer boast of battles fought and won.

The sun of triumph, with refulgent rays,
Dissolves the parting clouds that frowned in vain;
Eutaw and Yorktown close the battle days,
And Britain here ends her inglorious reign!

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Again your peals, ye merry Boston bells!
  Smile in your graves at Lexington, ye dead!
Mother to prattling babe the story tells,
  And priests in prayers the joyful tidings spread!

Ye nations of the East with histories old,
  Turn to the West your eyes,—in light impearled,
A bannered realm of new-born States behold,
  Whose rising stars shall glorify the world!

Who, living in the harvest-time of grace,
  When a brave people's hopes high promise wear,
Has failed to note the glow on every face,
  Like sunlight of the soul benignly fair?

The tempest rage of passion passing by,
  Leaves the mild semblance of serener day;
So pure the zenith air, the azure sky,
  So sink the distant clouds and pass away.

To thee, O Washington! a hymn to thee,
  A song of victory and a pæan grand!
But ah! the harp-strings fail of melody,
  Or only murmur to the trembling hand.

For great the man who sword for country draws,
  To sheathe it not till triumph shall be won;
But greater he, obedient to the laws,
  Who lays it down when duty all is done.

Full many a chieftain, from victorious field
  Returning, flushed with pride, in war array,
Has stormed the gates of Rome behind his shield,
  And forced a Roman senate to obey.

Thou, having power scarce measured or defined,
  Didst lay thy armor at thy country's feet,
And pass, with benedictions of mankind,
  To calm contentment in thy loved retreat.

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O! happy he who, weary, putteth by
A load long borne, to sacred purpose true;
For him the meed: "Well done!" a triumph high,
More grand than victor Roman ever knew.

Rest! 'tis not lying down to sleep and dream,
Or in oblivion lose the thread of time;
Peace! 'tis not sailing on a waveless stream,
Where spicy winds blow over fragrant clime.

Peace! rest! while work remaineth to be done,
The full fruition promised to receive!
As well bid pause the courses of the sun—
As well the ocean billows cease to heave.

The States redeemed, once shackled and enslaved,
Thrilled into freedom and an untried life,
By wisdom must from anarchy be saved,
And all the woes of internecine strife,

If grave the peril of the great campaign,
Whence they emerged and bore the victor's palm,
Not less important now the end to gain:
To soothe the public pulse to peace and calm.

Disjointed, free;—each, as a sovereign power,
Claims independent signature and seal;
But all are wise in the momentous hour,
And form a compact for the common weal.

United, strong; what man the choice shall be,
To give due weight and warrant to the laws?
What chief the new Lycurgus? Who but he
That bore the brunt of war and won their cause?

As the staunch bark, when troubled ocean raves,
And clouds tempestuous sweep athwart the sky,
Lifts her broad prow majestic o'er the waves,
Which sweep in fury impotently by,

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So thou, when surges threaten to o'erwhelm,
  Dost rise victorious o'er the troubled scene:
A new Columbus, master of the helm,
  To guide to fairer realms and seas serene.

Hero immortal! who, the bards among,
  Shall, with fit eulogy, the theme prolong?
To worthier harp the triumph should be sung,
  Thy grand career the minstrel's thought and song.

If to thy honor were a shaft to rise,
  In classic grace beseeming thy renown,
The glorious marble should invade the skies,
  With Heaven's eternal sunlight on its crown.

Leader of men! in every mood sublime!
  Thy wisdom taught them to be truly free;
And thus thy life, adown the stream of time,
  Passed on, like tranquil river to the sea.

"'Tis well!" thy latest words when leaving Earth;
  For death alone could be thy greater gain;
And wise men deem thee, when they measure worth,
  One of the few that have not lived in vain!

Beloved! revered! what time the orb of day
  Shall cease to circle Earth with path of flame;
When stars shall leave the sky and pass away,
  And Heaven's historian read the roll of fame;

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The Angel of the Trump, on pinions spread,
Shall to the worlds proclaim the great award:
A crown of light auroral for thy head,
Gemmed with the brightest jewels of the Lord.

Mount Vernon! Washington! Once more I press,
With fancy's feet, the lawns he loved so well;
Again I turn, the noble dust to bless,
And list the requiem of the passing-bell!

Soft is the bed whereon a patriot lies!
His memory rich whose name to honor moves!
He sleeps serenely who has won the prize!
He rests in virtue whom the Lord approves!

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